

Syracuse University

## SURFACE

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Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone  
Projects

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## Voices Only

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INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - EVENING

In a dimly lit, medium size class room thirty men, aged 18 to 35 are getting ready in eerie silence. The men of Stratford University's oldest singing a cappella group, THE CLEFTOMANIACS, are pulling together their uniforms for the evening's sold out 2017 alumni reunion concert. Converse sneakers are being tied, ties straightened, and black shirts tucked into denim jeans. The evening's program sits on a table, the front reads, "The CLEFS Reunion Show. May 3rd 2017. A night 20 years in the process." We hear the narration of MATT TURNER, at this point he is a 30 year old art museum curator, he is amongst the men but not shown.

MATT (V.O.)

It's an uncomfortable feeling that comes over you at that moment. It's not bad, its just uncomfortable. Your mind races from one thing to another, as energy bubbles underneath. Almost to a point of spilling over. Each one of us could probably shout at the top of our lungs right about now.

The men begin to stretch. Each one bending down, touching their toes and shaking out their joints. A couple of younger members give each other high fives and shoulder rubs.

The silence breaks with a few men blowing air out of their lungs. Then come the lip trills and the falsetto drops of vocal exercises. Noise in the room starts to build as singing warm ups turn into conversation. The members turn to each other and whisper casual "don't forgets" and "what song is first?"

DOM, the Clef's current music director steps to the front of the classroom. All of his dialog is inaudible.

DOM

Alright guys. Lets line up the formation for "Don't Stop Believing." The audience is this way.

DOM points to the blackboard behind him. The twenty-five identically dressed singers move about the room to align themselves in a square clump-ish like formation.

DOM (CONT.)

Good.

He walks to his spot in the group. The men focus hard on whats about to come, every face looks straight out, unwaivering.

DOM (CONT.)

OK, this is all you get.

He blows into a PITCH PIPE, a single note is heard. A few men hum the note.

DOM (CONT.)

Let's hear it. One, two, three,  
four.

The silence is suddenly broken. In four part harmony the men launch into an all voices version of Journey's "Don't Stop Believing." After a few seconds DOM cuts them off. He nods, the guys break out of formation, loosening up. DOM signals the guys into a huddle. The men huddle up and bring their hands in. The anticipation reads on the smiles on their faces.

MATT (V.O.)

All the pride of a sports team and  
brotherhood of a fraternity couldn't  
match this moment.

Suddenly DOM is audible.

DOM

Let's steal some hearts. Clefs on  
Three. One, two, three!

ALL

CLEFS!

The room explodes in clapping and jumping up and down. The guys are beginning to boil over as they leave the room with great excitement.

INT. AVERY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

An audience full of people wait for the Clef's arrival. The groups is waiting for their entrance. A peek through the curtain shows a max capacity crowd. A female voice rings through the theater.

FEMALE EMCEE

Welcome everybody. Thanks for  
coming out, we all know why we're  
here. I love them, you love them.  
The ladies want em and the guys want  
to be em. Without any more  
introduction, Stratford's oldest  
all male a cappella group - hold  
onto those panties girls - THE  
CLEFTOMANIACS.

The crowd erupts in cheers as the men run onto the stage. The bright lights glare and distort their vision. They can't make out the faces of the crowd but they can hear them roar. They throw down their water bottles and get into a familiar formation.

MATT (V.O.)

There's a funny thing about college  
a cappella. It's widely regarded as  
simultaneously the coolest thing  
you can do and the lamest. So at this  
point, for the members of this

group, the only question is, what makes it so great?

DOM blows a note on the pitch pipe. He counts. Everyone takes a deep breath after "three."

DOM  
One, two, three, four.

CUT TO: BLACK, TITLES

TITLE fades over black.

EXT. STRATFORD UNIVERSITY QUAD - DAY

A large sign surrounded by balloons overlooks the green quad of Stratford University. It is hung on a large, historical building. The sign reads "Welcome Class of 2009." MATT, at the age of 18, walks across the field with his MOTHER. The two enter the building.

INT. LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING - DAY - CONTINUOUS

MATT and his MOTHER approach an information table down the hallway. MATT's reluctance counterbalances his MOTHER's eagerness.

ORIENTATION LEADER  
Hi! Welcome to Stratford University. Are you a new student?

MOTHER  
Yes, this is Matt, he's living in Garrison Hall. We're looking for some information on student groups and clubs.

MATT (V.O.)  
I never appreciated my mom. Despite her best intentions.

MATT  
Mom.

MOTHER  
Sorry.  
(To her son)  
What?

MATT  
Just don't. I can do it myself.

MOTHER  
Alright.  
(Back to the ORIENTATION LEADER)  
Apparently I'm being an embarrassing, over bearing mother. My son has a question.

MATT

Thanks Ma. Yes, I was looking for some information on student groups and clubs.

ORIENTATION LEADER

Okay great! Here's a brochure that lists all of our student activities. There are club sports, political activists, performance troupes. Anything, anyone could possibly be interested in, we have a club for.

The ORIENTATION LEADER hands MATT some pamphlets, he wanders down the hallway. His MOTHER continues to chat with the girl.

MOTHER

Are there any fun activities going on this week?

ORIENTATION LEADER

Of course! Tomorrow night is the freshmen pep rally. The students' RA's will be taking them down.

MOTHER

That's wonderful.

MATT has turned the corner and is now faced with several closed classroom doors. Behind one he hears a group of guys laughing. He puts his ear to the door.

JON

(Silencing the group)  
Alright everyone be quiet. Lets sing through this. Ready.

JON plays a few notes on a piano.

JON (CONT.)

Five, six, seven, eight.

For the first time MATT hears college acappella music. The CLEFS sing "The Freshman" by Verve Pipe. It's a beautiful, rich arrangement. MATT's eyes widen, his interest is piqued. His MOTHER turns the corner and interrupts this spiritual moment.

MOTHER

Ready to go?

MATT

(Snapping out of it)  
Oh. Yeah. Sure.

INT. GARRISON HALL - DAY

MATT carrying a large box, kicks open the door to a dorm room. The room is tiny. With only one large window on the far wall. On the left side a stripped bed, vacant desk and dresser. On the opposite bed sits 19 year old, CHET. His bed is made, his posters are hung and his FATHER sits at the desk installing his printer.

CHET

Hey! Matt right?

CHET leaps to his feet and goes to shake his new

MATT

Yeah, hi, how's it going?

(Noticing a poster)

I love Guster.

CHET

Totally. Seen em six times.

MOTHER

Hi. I'm Matt's mother.

She vigorously shakes CHET's hand and his FATHER's.

MOTHER (CONT.)

So this is nice! I feel bad for those poor kids who got stuck in a forced triple. Could you imagine three people in this room?

MATT

(Annoyed)

Can't say I could. But this should be fine.

MOTHER

Do you have a major yet CHET?

CHET

I'm listed as music education, for now.

MOTHER

That's wonderful, Matt is going into Art History.

MATT

Also for now.

MOTHER

Ya know what they say, the average college student will change his major three times before graduation.

MATT

There's no way that can be true. I'm going to get the rest of the stuff from the car.

EXT. CAR OUTSIDE OF GARRISON HALL - DAY

MATT emerges from the back of the car. His MOTHER stands in front of the vehicle.

MATT  
I think thats all of it.

MOTHER  
Are you sure you'll be alright? I  
can stay one more day.

MATT  
Its fine Mom. I'll be fine.

MOTHER  
Do you have everything you need?  
Maybe we should back go to Bed, Bath  
and Beyond.

MATT  
Mom. I'm fine.

MOTHER  
Alright. Well...I love you. Call me  
later.

MATT  
Love you too. Will do.

They hug. MATT heads back inside as his MOM drives off.

INT. HALLWAY CONTINUOUS - DAY

MATT strolls through the dorm hallway. Taking his time to look at various POSTERS and FLIERS aimed at new freshmen. In bright colors and loud designs, they read about playing intramural sports, auditioning for dance troupes, and attending religious services. Finally, his eyes hit a poster for the CLEFS.

MATT stares for a minute at this one. A girl in a towel is standing with her back to the camera, holding up her hair, it seems she has just stepped out of the shower. Above it reads, "She sings in the shower. Do you?" underneath, "AUDITION for Stratford's only ALL MALE A CAPPELLA GROUP, The Cleftomaniacs. August 29th 11 am to 3 pm"

MATT (V.O.)  
She sings in the shower. Do you?

MATT rips down the poster and heads to his room.

INT. DORM ROOM CONTINUOUS - DAY

CHET is clicking away at his computer. His father has left. MATT enters the room and places the poster in front of CHET. MATT sits on his bed and unties his shoes.

CHET  
She sings in the shower. Do you?

MATT  
Sometimes.

CHET  
I sang a cappella in high school.  
We were "The C Sharps."

MATT  
I thought it was like a singing  
thing.

CHET  
I'm probably going to audition.  
Stress those choir muscles.

MATT  
Oh so its like chorus?

CHET  
Not exactly. It's kind of like a  
bunch of dudes getting together and  
learning songs and then they...

CHET continues to speak inaudibly.

MATT (V.O.)  
Turns out CHET was more familiar  
with the world of a cappella than  
he let on. For the next hour he  
went on to explain pretty much everything  
there is to know about it. Giving  
me a complete breakdown. His history  
lesson went something like this--

CUT TO: MEMBERS OF THE CLEFTOMANIACS DRESSED UP AS MONK

MATT (V.O.) (CONT)  
College a cappella is singing in a  
group of peers without instrumental  
accompaniment. 'A cappella'  
literally means from the chapel and comes  
from chanting, the aural tradition  
within the church.

CUT TO: THE CLEFS MEMBERS ARE NOW DRESSED UP AS IVY LEAGUERS

MATT (V.O.) (CONT)  
In its collegiate form, a cappella  
dates back to early Ivy league  
tradition - turn of the century.  
Premiere Ivy groups, such as the renowned  
Yale Whiffenpoofs - started the  
format. Heavily influenced by  
barbershop and its tight four part harmonies.  
The practice spread, well, like Ivy  
throughout New England. Each prestigious  
school had a group.



As we moved through the century more and more groups popped up. Rigorous touring and word of mouth between neighboring schools kept it alive. The groups started to expand and stray from traditional music. The first place they looked was the charts. They covered popular music with just their voices. There were male groups, female groups, and even mixed groups.

CUT TO: THE MODERN CLEFS SINGING AT VARIOUS GIGS.

MATT (V.O.) (CONT)

Then the internet was invented. And suddenly a cappella was every where. Between 1990 and when I got to college, over 1,200 groups had formed across the country. There were compilation CDs, international competitions, websites, and fans. Some pop stars even got their start doing acappella. Accomplished musicians such as John Legend and Sara Barellis were acappella singers before they were Grammy winners.

Students around the globe could be heard singing Coldplay songs in 15 parts, with full on choreography and most importantly, no instruments.

CUT BACK TO: CHET AND MATT'S ROOM

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

MATT (V.O.) (CONT)

Chet finished his history lesson with a bit about his former high school group.

CHET

And we sang What I Got by Sublime, some Chili Peppers, and I arranged Demons by Guster.

MATT

Arranged?

CHET

I wrote out the sheet music for the group to sing. I had to listen to it like a million times in order to figure it out.

MATT

Got it.

CHET

We recorded a CD, I've got it, if you want to check it out.

MATT

Sure.

CHET

Did you do sing in high school?

MATT

I played a little guitar in a ska band. Sang back up sometimes. Oh and at church. Does that count? I was never any good at it.

CHET

You should give it a shot.

MATT

We'll see.

INT. COLLEGE STADIUM - NIGHT

The entire new freshmen class is sitting in the bleachers of Stratford's athletic stadium. They chat amongst themselves, as their RAs stand at the end of the rows purveying. They all hold or wear blue t shirts, given out when they walked in. MATT and CHET take their seats in the crowd. The ORIENTATION LEADER steps out on to the stage to introduce the performing groups at the evenings rally.

ORIENTATION LEADER

Good evening Class of 2009!

A few cheers are heard from the crowd.

ORIENTATION LEADER (CONT)

That was awful! One more time...GOOD EVENING CLASS OF 2009!!!

Louder yet forced cheers come from the already restless crowd.

ORIENTATION LEADER (CONT)

Thank you! Welcome to Stratford University, home of the Fighting Bulls! LETS GO BULLS, LETS GO BULLS!

The crowd does not join her ill attempt at a cheer.

ORIENTATION LEADER (CONT)

Tonight we've got some amazing student groups that are going to perform, as well as the marching band and don't worry we're going to teach you all of our awesome

cheers! Without further ado, here  
is our first group, Strat's only  
all female acappella group The Bull  
Horns.

THE BULL HORNS, a group of thirteen women take the stage dressed  
in all black with brightly colored pieces of flair. They  
form two lines and after a blow on the pitch pipe launch  
into an arrangement of "Walking on Broken Glass."

CHET  
Eh, not bad.

MATT  
They're good.

CHET  
I've seen better.

The HORNS finish up and walk off the stage. The ORIENTATION LEADER  
climbs on stage again.

ORIENTATION LEADER  
In just a moment their male  
counterparts, The Cleftomaniacs will  
take the stage. But before they do,  
both groups wanted us to remind you that they  
will be having auditions this  
weekend! So talk to them after and  
go audition! Now, the Clefs!

In their signature jeans, black shirts and ties the men  
storm the stage. They sing the arrangement of "The Freshman"  
MATT had previously heard. They're giving one hundred and  
ten percent, MATT and CHET are captivated.

MATT (V.O.)  
In all honesty I can't even  
remember how they sounded at this  
show. It could have been total garbage  
and I still would have been blown  
away. You got the idea that no one  
in a three mile radius was having  
as much fun as they were.

They finish up their tune.

CHET  
So are you going to audition with  
me now?

MATT  
I think so.

INT. MUSIC SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

The sign for the Clef's auditions hangs on the wall. Several  
boys sit in the hallway humming songs to themselves and  
filling out forms. MATT and CHET walk in and grab forms for  
each of them to fill out. They sit and start to write.

A BOY exits from the auditions room. He nods to CHET and MATT.

BOY  
Good luck.

CHET  
Thanks.

Another guy, JON, exits the audition room. JON is a the current president of the group. MATT stands and hands both of their papers to him. JON looks down at the sheets.

JON  
CHET? You'll be first.

CHET follows JON into the room. MATT sits outside and listens attentively. CHET launches into "In The Still of The Night" Practically blowing away the competition. CHET is a much better singer than MATT expected.

MATT (V.O.)  
CHET wasn't bad.

After several minutes CHET comes out.

MATT  
Sounded good. You really expect me to follow that?

CHET  
Thanks, it wasn't bad. Hard to read them. Watch out for the tonal memory, its tricky. I'll wait for you out here. Good luck.

MATT looks blankly back at CHET.

MATT (V.O.)  
Tonal what?

CHET plugs in head phones and takes a seat.

MATT  
Thanks, yeah.

JON comes out of the room.

JON  
Matt?

MATT  
Yep.

MATT follows JON into the room.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The Clef's rehearsal room, last seen twelve years in the future.

It looks essentially the same, except for the abundance of light pouring in through the large windows. Eight Clefs sit in wooden desks facing the chalk board. JON takes his place behind the black, grand piano. A series of music notes are written on the staves on the board.

JON  
 Alright, this is Matt Turner,  
 Freshmen, Baritone. If you'll stand  
 in the middle of the room. You can  
 sing your song first.

MATT moves to the center and faces the guys. He sings "Take On Me" by Aha. His nerves come through as he strains for the high notes. His inexperience shows, but the guys don't let it phase them. Their poker faces remain unchanged.

JON  
 Good. Now we'll do a range check.  
 You can sing on "La."

JON plays scales and MATT follows. This part he can do.

JON  
 Okay, if you'll turn around, we've  
 got some sight reading on the  
 board. Here is your starting note.

He plucks out a note on the piano. MATT tries to sing the lines but thoroughly butchers it.

JON  
 Let's do the tonal memory. I'll  
 play a series of 5 notes, you sing  
 them back to me on La.

JON plays a series of notes, atonal and awkward. MATT sings them back. He does well only flubbing one note. They repeat this twice, each time it gets more difficult. MATT does not do as well the second and third time round.

JON  
 Good. Now we're going to sing with  
 the group. You heard Don't Stop  
 Believing at Orientation?

MATT  
 Umm, yeah.

JON hands MATT the sheet music

MATT (V.O.)  
 I couldn't read sheet music. He  
 might as well have handed me Latin.

The guys get to their feet and circle up, including MATT in the circle.

JON  
 You'll be singing with Craig, he's

on baritone.

CRAIG smiles at MATT and points to the sheet music.

JON (CONT.)

We'll sing it twice through, then  
Craig will drop out and you'll be  
on your own.

They sing thirty seconds of the song a few times through.

JON (CONT.)

Ok, thanks a lot. We're going to  
let everyone know by phone call.

MATT and JON walk out into the hallway. CHET gets to his feet,  
so they can leave.

JON

Next?

INT. DORM ROOM - THAT NIGHT

MATT sits alone in the dorm room. He taps his pencil against the  
desk, clicks across his computer and checks his phone  
multiple times. He leans back in his chair and lets out a  
deep sigh. His phone starts to vibrate loudly on the desk.  
He looks at the caller ID, disappointed he opens up

MATT

Hi Mom...No, now's not a bad  
time... I'm doing well. Just waiting  
for an important phone call...Just  
some group that I auditioned for...The Cleftomaniacs.  
They're a signing group...Yeah, I  
didn't know I could sing either...  
Thanks. I hope so too... Ok, I love  
you too. I'll call you when I find  
out.

MATT leans back in his chair and turns to the clock. It  
fades to a later hour. MATT is now asleep with his head on  
the desk. CHET loudly barges into the room. MATT sits up at  
attention.

MATT

What time is it? What's going on.

CHET

Did you get your call?

MATT

What?

CHET

The Clefs.

MATT

(Looking at the clock)

Uh no.

CHET sits on his bed and begins to untie his shoes. As their conversation goes on, he changes and gets ready for bed.

CHET  
Oh, weird.

MATT  
Did you?

CHET  
I did.

MATT  
And?

CHET  
I'll tell you after they call you.

MATT  
I don't think they're going to. I doubt I got in.

CHET  
Come on, you did. You know you did. They'd be dumb not to take you.

MATT  
Thanks, but I seriously messed up the sight reading. It was a disaster. Just tell me if they took you.

CHET  
I don't want things to be weird. Promise you won't be mad?

MATT  
It won't be weird. I'm a big boy. I think I can handle it.

CHET  
I got in.

MATT  
Oh man! Congrats.

CHET  
Thanks. I'm really excited. We've got initiation and our first rehearsal next week.

MATT  
Awesome.

CHET  
Do you mind shutting off the overhead lights and using your desk lamp?

MATT

Oh. Um, sure.

MATT shuts off the lights.

INT. DORM ROOM - MORNING

MATT's phone vibrates loudly on the desk. He stumbles out of bed to pick it up. It's a telemarketing recording. He puts the phone down and sits at his desk.

MATT (V.O.)

I didn't get in. They never called.  
At least call the guys you rejected  
and let them know you rejected  
them. Anyway, I didn't let it get  
me down.

MATT is pissed. He thrashes about and knocks his lamp off his desk, sending it across the room.

MATT (V.O.) (CONT)

But I decided that I wasn't going  
to let one rejection stop me from  
being involved. Much to the  
pleasure of my mother, I signed up  
for a lot of different activities  
that year. Let's see, first there  
was the Fighting Bull Players, they  
were an experimental theater group.

CUT TO: AVERY AUDITORIUM

INT. AVERY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

MATT and the other PLAYERS stand on a stage in black pants and black turtle necks. Deep lines and characters are drawn on their faces in black make up. They move about in slow motion as the lights shift dramatically between light and dark, color to color. A crashing GONG is heard. The players freeze and turn their heads to the audience.

PLAYER 1

PASSION!

PLAYER 2

FRIGHT!

MATT

VIRTUOSITY!

Another GONG and they begin to move again. The audience is empty except for one AUDIENCE MEMBER. AUDIENCE MEMBER gets up and walks out.

CUT TO: DORM ROOM

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY



MATT walks into the room in his turtle neck and make up. CHET, is in full Clefs garb, he ties up his Converse shoes and walks out. MATT sits back down at his desk.

MATT (V.O.)  
I tried joining the juggling club.

CUT TO: GYM

INT. GYM - DAY

A few guys on unicycles throw pins back and forth at each other. They are well seasoned. MATT picks up three bean bags and can barely stay afloat. He throws up his bean bags and accidentally knocks one guy off his unicycle. The pin just released by that Cyclor flies wildly across the room knocking off the other guy.

CYCLER 1  
What the fuck, man?!

CUT TO: DORM ROOM

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

MATT sits at his desk throwing up one bean bag. CHET enters the room in his Clefs uniform.

MATT (V.O.)  
I even rushed a fraternity.

CUT TO: FRATERNITY HOUSE

INT. FRATERNITY HOUSE - DAY

MATT and a bunch of other scared freshmen are being shown around a fraternity house. It is dingy and disgusting.

FRAT TOUR GUIDE  
Up ahead is our smoking room. And  
on the right is Denkman's room.

DENKMAN, an overweight, mess of a man emerges.

DENKMAN  
I heard my name. Oh, rushes. You  
dudes should totally join our  
house. Cause we're not lame and we  
like to party. You will get laid. Guaranteed.  
And not by ugly chicks either. I'm  
talking only eights and above here...Bro!  
What day is it.

FRAT TOUR GUIDE  
Wednesday.

DENKMAN

Shit, I've got class.

DENKMAN stares at the TOUR GUIDE. They both start cracking up with laughter. They shriek loudly at DENKMAN's not-that-funny joke. DENKMAN heads back into his room.

INT. DORM ROOM - DAY

MATT sits at his desk. He has a pile of books to his left. He writes in a notebook.

MATT (V.O.)

And I was taking an outrageous course load. I'm pretty sure at this point I had solidified my Art History major, I think. I was never too passionate about it. Turned out it was a lot of studying history.

Time passes. The book pile keeps changing. Growing and getting smaller continuously. MATT is shown reading, writing, and typing. He comes out of it. Stands up, walks over to his bed and crashes onto it.

As MATT closes his eyes to get some much deserved sleep, CHET crashes into the room.

CHET

Matty! You awake?

MATT

No.

CHET

Good, then you won't mind if I play this music really loudly.

He turns up some obnoxiously loud hip hop on his computer.

MATT

C'mon Chet. I have to leave for class in thirty minutes, give me that much.

CHET

(Turning it down)  
I'm just playing, jeez. What class do you have anyway?

MATT

Early Restoration Painting Theory and Criticism.

CHET

Thrilling.

MATT

Basically. You have rehearsal tonight right?

CHET

Yeah, our semester end show is Friday. You coming?

MATT

Got my ticket today. But tonight, thats good, it'll give me some time to study.

CHET

Of course. Study away.

MATT turns over, CHET turns the music back up.

INT. AVERY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

MATT walks into the auditorium. It's packed with college students milling about, finding their seats and chatting loudly. "Hi, How are you"s echo across the hall. A couple of familiar faces from the Bull Players signal MATT over. He sits with them. Most of the crowd has taken its seats.

Without warning the lights dim and the crowd erupts. The CLEFS jog onto the stage. They put down their water bottles and get into place for their first song. JON pulls out a pitch pipe from his pocket and blows on it. He counts them in.

JON

One, two, three, four.

They rip into the recognizable intro of "When I Come Around" by Green Day. The crowd cheers once again after realizing what song they were hearing. They cheer louder when JASON, a small Asian boy, steps forward to sing the solo. CHET can barely be seen, he's somewhere in the back.

MATT (V.O.)

I was bitter about not getting in, yes, but I tried to enjoy the concert nevertheless. It only made me want it more.

The boys finish up the song. JON steps out to say some words.

JON

Thanks everyone, we're the Cleftomaniacs and that was Green Day.Â A couple of announcements, we have some new members. If they'd like to step forward.

CHET and two other boys step out of the ranks.

JON (CONT.)

Chet Mackenzie, Mike Reese, and Stuart Stevens.

The crowd cheers for the new boys. Stuart Stevens points to the crowd, making gun trigger motions with his hands.

MATT  
 (Screaming)  
 YEAH CHET!

JON  
 And guess what gentlemen The Clefs  
 are having another round of  
 auditions. So come next Saturday to  
 the music school and maybe you too  
 can be up here. Sorry ladies,  
 penises only.

The crowd laughs. JON steps away from the microphone. MATT studies the group.

INT. MUSIC SCHOOL HALLWAY/REHEARSAL ROOM - DAY

MATT is sitting alone in the hallway waiting to be called. He is the last person to audition that day. Many guys have come in and out. JON steps out of the rehearsal room.

JON  
 Ready?

MATT  
 Yeah.

MATT gets up and follows JON in. A similar scene is presented before MATT, except this time CHET is sitting on the other side.

JON  
 (To group)  
 This is Matt Turner, freshman,  
 baritone.  
 (To MATT)  
 Whenever you're ready.

MATT takes some deep breaths. This is his do or die moment. He sings a slick rendition of Gavin Degraw's "I Don't Want To Be." It is clear that he's practiced. MATT sings scales, does tonal memory and sight reads well. He then sings "When I Come Around" with the group. Everything goes smoothly.

JON  
 We'll call you.

MATT leaves the room.

INT. DORM ROOM - MORNING

MATT'S phone buzzes on his desk. He stumbles out of bed to answer it. Before opening it, he looks to see who it is. Unknown Number. He hesitates but decides to answer anyway.

MATT  
 Hello?

JON

(Over the phone)  
Hi? Matt?

MATT  
Uh yeah, who's this?

JON  
It's Jon from the Clefs. I wanted to let you know we've accepted you, congratulations.

MATT  
Oh man! Really? Thanks.

JON  
It is your duty to show up tonight on the Quad outside Avery at 8 pm for your initiation.

MATT  
I will, thanks again.

JON  
See you there. Oh and one more thing, please wear all black.

EXT. STRATFORD UNIVERSITY QUAD - DUSK

MATT is walking across the quad.

MATT (V.O.)  
Initiation is a secret tradition. Every Clef goes through it. I was a night, I may never forget.

Two scared boys in all black stand in front of Avery Hall. FRANKIE DELESCO, a festively plump sophomore, and RON, a flamboyant scrawny African American freshman, are decked out in black shirts and pants. MATT, in matching black clothing, walks up to FRANKIE and RON.

FRANKIE  
Clefs initiation?

MATT  
Nah, on my way to a funeral. I'm Matt.

FRANKIE  
Frankie.

RON  
Ron.

They shake hands.

MATT  
You guys both freshmen?

RON

I am.

FRANKIE  
I'm a sophomore.

The door to Avery Hall swings open. DAN, one of the elder members and President of the Clefs, in a sweatshirt with the hood pulled up, emerges.

DAN  
(Stoically)  
You three can follow me.

INT. AVERY HALL - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The three newbies follow DAN into the large auditorium. JON is pounding out frightening, haunting music on the piano. DAN walks them down the aisle and has them sit in the front row. He then walks on stage to address them.

DAN  
Before we officially welcome the three of you into The Cleftomaniacs, you must go on a journey. A journey all of us have taken before. Every member of the Clefs, since its formation in 1992, have been where you are now. On your voyage you will learn important facts about the Clefs. Please do not forget all that you may hear, it will come in handy later. Once your trip is complete you will be a Clef and there will be great rewards. Until then here is your first clue, you have thirty minutes.

DAN pulls an envelope out of his pocket and hands it to the new members. JON and DAN disappear backstage. RON tears into the letter.

RON  
Go to the place where the starving all meet. Once you are there sing a song and buy us this food to eat...  
(Turning over the page)  
And they were kind enough to include a shopping list for us.

FRANKIE  
(Grabbing the paper from RON)  
Chicken sandwich, slice of pizza, nachos. I think we have to go to Jameson food court.

RON  
Good, I'm starving.

The boys exit the auditorium.

EXT. CAMPUS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The three boys run across the campus.

INT. JAMESON FOOD COURT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The boys run in and order the food they are expected to get. They bring it to the cashier, an older, slightly checked out lady.

CASHIER

No no. I was told you boys have to sing before I can let you have your food.

MATT

(Panicking)

We don't know any songs.

RON

Happy birthday?

FRANKIE checks his watch and motions for them to hurry things along. They sing happy birthday even though its no one's birthday. The CASHIER is happy, she rings them up and hands them a piece of paper.

MATT

(Reading)

The Cleftomaniacs have recorded 3 studio albums since 1992, they are "Standing Room Only" "Don't Forget The Cups" and "Sings Some Songs." Bring your load to 725 Redington Road.

EXT. CAMPUS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The boys run across campus, food in hand.

EXT./INT. REDINGTON HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The boys knock on the door. No one answers. RON tries opening the door.

RON

It's open.

No one is around in the house. A note is taped to the wall next to them. RON, the only one willing to step inside, takes the note.

RON

(Reading)

Leave the food, and ascend to the highest point on campus. How many stairs did it take you to get there?

The boys drop off the food inside the house.

EXT. CAMPUS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The boys run across campus. FRANKIE leads the way. They arrive at a seemingly never ending flight of stairs.

FRANKIE

These steps go up to the College on the Hill dorms. I lived there last year. I think you're supposed to count them.

The boys run up the stairs, counting each step as they do. Finally they reach the top. CHET and another Clef, STUART are waiting for them.

RON, FRANKIE, MATT

Two hundred and forty three.

STUART

Wrong, do it again.

The boys run down the stairs and count as they go down. They then run up once more but CHET and STUART are gone.

RON

Those bitches. They're gone.

MATT notices a small brown bag at their feet. He picks it up and pulls a piece of paper out of it.

MATT

Get your asses back to Redington.

The trio run down the stairs one more time and jog over

EXT. REDINGTON HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

JON and DAN are standing on the porch as the three newbies run up.

JON

Gentlemen. Before we let you in, what year were the Clefs founded?

RON

1992

DAN

Name 2 Clefs albums.

MATT

Standing Room Only and uh...

FRANKIE

Sings Some Songs.

JON

Well, Dan? Are they ready?

DAN



I think they are.

JON opens up the door to the house.

INT. REDINGTON HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Miraculously, the previously vacant house is full of people, all with drinks in their hands. They scream and cheer for the new Clefs. FRANKIE, MATT, and RON enter the party and are immediately handed drinks. Everyone already seems to know their names. CHET spots MATT and comes over to hug him.

MATT  
Very funny back there.

CHET  
Hey. We had to do it too.

MATT  
I suppose.

CHET  
Wait, there's someone who wants to meet you.

CHET pulls a pretty girl out from the crowd.

CHET (CONT.)  
This is Missy. She tells me, that she's the biggest Clefs

MISSY  
I wouldn't say that. But I do love you guys.

CHET  
Well, I'm going to leave you two to talk about how much you're looking forward to the next concert.

CHET winks at MATT. MATT and MISSY smile at each other. MATT not knowing what to do next stands there awkwardly.

MISSY  
I really love the Clefs.

MATT  
Yeah, they're good.

They stand in silence for a few more moments. MISSY is bored and begins to look around for her friends. Clearly MATT doesn't know what to do.

MISSY  
Well it was nice meeting you. I'm going to go find my friends.

MATT (V.O.)  
(Ironically)  
I had arrived.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

The Clefs are hanging around and talking in their rehearsal room.  
MATT looks slightly out of place.

MATT (V.O.)

My first few rehearsals were pretty stressful. They threw a lot of new music at us. And as reluctant as I would have been to admit it, my talents were not up to par. A few years later, I was amazed how myself and the group had grown. The songs we did senior year were much more difficult than what we did as freshmen.

JON walks into the room and settles everybody down.

JON

Alright everybody circle up.

The guys organize themselves into a circle.

JON (CONT.)

I brought some new music. "Welcome to the Jungle" and Dispatch's "Here We Go." We'll be splitting up into sectionals to go over it.

He hands out the papers.

JON (CONT.)

For the benefit of the new guys, lets go around the circle and introduce ourselves. Name, year, major and officer position, if you have one. I'm Jon, a Junior Music Education major and I'm the music director.

DAN

Dan, Senior, Pre-med. And I'm your president slash resident dictator.

The guys huff in agreement.

BRIAN

I'm Brian, I'm a Sophomore business management major.

CHET

Chet, music industry Freshman.

RON

My name is Ronnie, I'm a newspaper major, Freshman.

REESE

Hey guys, I'm Mike, but most people call me Reese. I'm a sophomore Spanish major.

RYAN  
Whats up I'm Ryan. Senior. Music Industry.

CRAIG  
Name's Craig. Also a senior and I'm an Earth Science major.

FRANKIE  
Hello. I'm Frankie, Sophomore. and I'm a nutrition and health major.

The guys seem confused by the irony of his size in comparison to his major.

FRANKIE (CONT.)  
Nah, I'm just fucking with you guys. I'm a Broadcast major.

MATT  
Uhhh, I'm Matt. I'm a freshman. And I'm an art history major.

REESE  
A what?

MATT  
Art History.

REESE  
Oh like paintings and shit.

MATT  
Studying them at least.

CRAIG  
So if we ever need some pieces of art valued, we'll know where to go.

MATT  
I guess.

STUART  
I'm a bit of an artist. How much for this piece DaVinci?

STUART steps aside to reveal a lewd drawing he has done on the chalk board. The guys crack up.

JON  
Alright, bring it back. Moving along.

TJ, GEOFF, JASON, STUART, and JAKE introduce themselves.

JON

Good, now that everyone's  
acquainted. Take out "Welcome to the  
Jungle."

JON walks to the piano and plucks out the starting notes.

JON (CONT.)  
Lets try and sing through it. One,  
two, three, four.

The guys launch into the song for the first time. It sounds poor  
at best. A few of the new guys look lost. MATT looks to CHET  
to point him in the right direction. After a minute JON cuts  
them off.

JON (CONT.)  
Eh. Lets work on it.

He counts them in again. As the guys sing, the sheet music lays  
out on the table. We move into a close up of the sheet  
music.

Coming out of the paper, weeks have passed, the group is in  
a tight formation singing the song full out, with no  
problems. They reach the end.

JON  
There we go. Good job guys.  
Remember to keep the tempo and not  
lose intonation. Call time for the  
concert on Saturday is 6:30. Meet  
in this room.

The boys start to put on coats and file out of the room.

CHET  
You're doing good man.

MATT  
Thanks.

CHET  
No really, its tight.

MATT  
Came together pretty well I guess.  
Still nervous as hell for the  
concert, I need to look over some  
spots in the music.

CHET  
Don't stress, we've all got spots  
to look over. Its gonna kick ass.

They're the last to leave the room. They shut off the light and  
close the door.

INT. CASSIDY'S GRILL - DUSK

CHET, MATT, STUART and FRANKIE sit at a table at popular campus

eatery, CASSIDY'S. The place is adorned in the schools' colors, large TVs hang in every corner, playing various sporting events. A WAITRESS brings over a pizza at 2 pitchers of beer. They eat and drink.

MATT

How did you...

STUART

Fake I.D. playa.

MATT

You're not worried about getting caught?

STUART

Nah.

CHET

Hey, whatever happened with that girl Missy I introduced you to?

MATT

Oh, uh her. I don't know. She wasn't really my type.

FRANKIE

Exactly, it's gotta click you know?

MATT

Right.

STUART

Naw, she's just got be hot. Amy, the girl I'm seeing. She is a freaking minx.

CHET

When was the last time you hooked up?

MATT

Umm, I had a girlfriend in high school. But she didn't like me very much. Punched me in the face after prom. I had to get stitches.

FRANKIE and STUART laugh.

CHET

Yikes. You're a Clef now MATT you, have to step up your game.

FRANKIE

Don't listen to him Matt. Wait until you find the right person.

STUART

Shut up Frankie. Do you have a girlfriend?

FRANKIE  
Yeah there's this one girl.

STUART  
What's his name?

At that moment AMY, a leggy, ice cold blond walks into CASSIDY'S.  
She storms right over to the boys' table.

STUART (CONT.)  
Baby!

AMY  
(Pissed)  
Outside. Now.

STUART  
(Relieving himself)  
Gentlemen.

ALL  
Oooh!

The continue to eat the pizza.

INT. AVERY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

It is the night of the big year end concert. The auditorium is filling up with people. Loud rock music plays on the speakers. DAN, in his Clefs uniform, runs across the stage and rearranges some of the microphones.

MATT (V.O.)  
It ended up kicking a lot of ass.  
The set was tight, the audience was huge. Just as memorable as all the others. But one particular incident gave it legendary status.

CUT TO: REHEARSAL ROOM

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The Clefs are milling about the room. Their energy is similar to the crowd in the auditorium. They're stretching, jumping up and down, talking over their music and choreography. Some of them hum their voice parts and sing vocal warm ups. DAN enters the room.

DAN  
Pretty big crowd.

JON  
Nice. Are the mics good?

DAN  
Yeah, should be.

JON

(To the group)

Alright everyone! Circle up. You know what to do.

The guys form a circle and start massaging each other.

JON (CONT.)

Lets go around and say some things we should remember. I'll start with blend. Please listen across the group.

CHET

Staying in tune.

TJ

Pay attention to choreography.

JON

Switch.

The guys turn around and massage the person on the other side.

JASON

Smile. And don't forget faces.

DAN

Good. But most importantly, have fun and entertain. Lets bring it in.

The guys put their hands in.

DAN (CONT.)

On three. One, two, three.

ALL

Let's steal some hearts.

The guys rush out of the room. MATT hangs back and waits for FRANKIE, who is tying his shoe. When he stands, MATT takes a step back, FRANKIE is as pale as a ghost and is drenched in sweat.

MATT

You okay Frank?

FRANKIE

(Clearing his throat)

Yeah, fine. I'm fine.

MATT pats FRANKIE on the back as they leave the room.

INT. AVERY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The audience sits patiently in their seats. Suddenly the Clefs run on stage and the place erupts. The boys get into position for "Welcome to the Jungle." MATT looks out on the

crowd and smiles. He looks to CHET, who gives him an approving nod. The lights are blinding as they face the standing room only crowd. MATT's first moment of glory is finally upon him.

FRANKIE, on the other hand, looks panicked as he wipes the sweat from his face. The crowd hollers out members' names. DAN pushes his hands down, signaling them to be quiet. FRANKIE takes a few deep breaths. JAKE standing next to FRANKIE leans over to him.

JAKE

You gonna make it?

FRANKIE nods rapidly, but he turns away from JAKE and the group to take some deep breaths. JON blows the pitch pipe and sings the starting notes for the group. FRANKIE's face turns desperate, all of the color leaving his once rosy cheeks. JON begins to count them in.

JON

One, two, three --

But before he makes it to four, FRANKIE falls hard to the floor. The big man has fainted. The crowd gasps. A bunch of the guys turn around quickly, while a few of them actually sing the song as if nothing has happened. The crowd's gasps turn to laughter and whispering. JON cuts the guys off. They crowd around FRANKIE. A few of them lift him to his feet and walk him off the stage. The crowd cheers.

DAN

(Into the microphone)

Frankie Delesco, everybody.

DAN claps and runs off stage, only to come back a

DAN (CONT.)

Not to worry, he's going to be okay!

The crowd cheers. JON blows the pitch pipe again and counts them in. The group sings.

MATT (V.O.)

And like that, my first concert became "that time Frankie fainted."

INT. REDINGTON HOUSE KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

A bunch of the Clefs sit around the kitchen table drinking beers and playing cards. FRANKIE sits at the table sipping on a bottle of water.

RYAN

You want a beer Frank?

FRANKIE

The EMT said I shouldn't drink.



STUART

I'm gonna pass out if I have  
anymore.

FRANKIE

Hilarious.

TJ enters the kitchen.

TJ

Oh shit, FRANKIE!

FRANKIE

(Excitedly)

Hey man!

TJ pretends to faint.

FRANKIE (CONT.)

I hate you guys.

INT. CAREER COUNSELING OFFICE - DAY

CHARLIE VICTORY, a thirty something, fast talking career counselor, sits behind the desk in his office. The office is fairly modern looking, there are tons of books on job hunting, presenting yourself, and career building. Posters of companies and internship opportunities line the walls, along with CHARLIE VICTORY's various degrees. MR. VICTORY looks intensely at his computer.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

CHARLIE VICTORY

Come in.

MATT peeks through the door.

MATT

Mr. Victory?

CHARLIE VICTORY

Please call me Charlie.

MATT (V.O.)

Charlie Victory!

CHARLIE VICTORY (CONT.)

Sit, sit.

MATT

Thanks.

CHARLIE VICTORY pushes a candy dish towards MATT.

CHARLIE VICTORY

Sucker?

MATT

Umm. I'm good.

CHARLIE VICTORY  
More for me.

CHARLIE unwraps a lollipop and sticks it in his mouth.

CHARLIE VICTORY (CONT.)  
(between sucks)  
So, how can I help you Matt?

MATT  
Well I'm looking to get an  
internship for this summer, but I'm  
at a loss for what to do.

CHARLIE VICTORY  
What's your year and major?

MATT  
Sophomore, Art History.

CHARLIE VICTORY  
(Writing)  
Art history.

MATT  
Yes.

CHARLIE VICTORY  
(Giving his routine pitch)  
Here's how these things usually go.  
You tell me your interests, what  
kind of job you're looking for. We  
find some things that fit. You  
write a resume and cover letters.  
Wait for some interviews. Do the  
interviews, and you get the job. My  
name's not victory for nothing.  
Sound good?  
(He doesn't wait for a  
response)  
Good. What kind of jobs are you  
interested in?

MATT  
I was thinking of interning at a  
museum or auction house in New  
York.

CHARLIE VICTORY  
Perfect. Great. That'll go great  
with your art history major. Let's  
see.

CHARLIE VICTORY turns his gaze to his computer and clicks feverishly.  
A moment later 20 pages are printing out of his printer.

CHARLIE VICTORY (CONT.)  
(Handing him the papers)  
Here you go. Ten museums that have

internship programs. Apply to all of these.

MATT

Thanks.

CHARLIE VICTORY

Now lets talk resumes. What experience do you have that will help you get these jobs.

MATT

Uh, I don't know. I've worked some minimum wage jobs and done class projects.

CHARLIE VICTORY

Good, that'll work. Put that into your resume. Here.

CHARLIE gives MATT a thick packet of papers.

CHARLIE VICTORY (CONT.)

Instructions on how to effectively write a resume and cover letter.

MATT

Thanks.

CHARLIE VICTORY

(Standing)

Great. Well, looks like our time is up, I've got another student coming in. Let me know how it goes.

CHARLIE VICTORY shepherds MATT out of the room and closes the door behind him. MATT looks like he doesn't know what just happened.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

The evening's rehearsal is coming to a close. The guys sit in desks facing the front of the room, they are tired. The previous year's seniors are gone and a few fresh faces (KIRK and ADAM) appear amongst them. JON remains as the music director, JASON, the small Asian boy and the new president, addresses the group.

JASON

Alright guys, Saturday night we're going to SUNY Brockport for an invitational.

REESE

SUNY what?

JASON

Brockport. Their female group, the Beautiful Pitches, have invited us along with a bunch of other groups

to sing. And they're housing us.

TJ

And they're really hot. Like really hot.

JASON

Yeah, we're all gonna get laid. Well, except for MATT.

MATT

Thanks.

RON

(Suggestively)

Any male groups?

JASON

A few I think. Which just means more competition for us. Anyway, meet in the parking lot outside of the library at 3. Raise your hand if you can drive.

REESE, CHET, and JON raise their hands.

JASON (CONT.)

Reese, Chet, Jon thanks. We should be back by noon on Sunday at the latest. Have a good night everyone, see you Saturday at 3.

EXT. LIBRARY PARKING LOT - DAY

Most of the guys stand around on the sidewalk with duffel bags at their feet. REESE, CHET and JON sit in their cars. JASON looks around nervously.

JASON

Does anyone have Kirk's number?

ADAM

Yeah.

KIRK runs up with a duffel bag under his arm.

JASON

Kirk, good to see you. We're ready to go. Everyone have directions?

REESE, CHET and JON nod back. The guys put their bags in the cars and get on their way. The three cars caravan out of the parking lot.

EXT./INT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The cars drive down the road. Each car is shown in a series of rapid cuts. CHET's car sings at the top of their lungs. JON's car is sleeping, except for the driver, and REESE'S is in deep conversation. CHET's car pulls up next to REESE.

FRANKIE pulls down his pants and sticks his ass cheeks up against the window. The guys in the REESE'S car all give them the finger.

EXT. SUNY BROCKPORT - DUSK

Two cars pass a sign welcoming them to SUNY Brockport. They then pull into a parking lot outside of the school's student center. CHET's car and JON's car unload. JASON looks worried.

JASON

Yo Chet! Anyone in your car talked to the guys in Reese's car?

CHET

Nah, haven't seen them in a while.

JASON

Shit.

JASON whips out his cell phone and calls REESE.

JASON

Reese, are you guys close?

INTER CUT WITH HIGHWAY

EXT. HIGHWAY - DUSK

REESE

Bad news Jay.

JASON

No, no. Not bad news.

REESE

My engine kept stalling, and then finally gave out. We're all fine but I've had to call a tow. We're literally in the middle of fucking nowhere.

JASON

Shit. Well good to hear you guys are alright.

REESE

Yeah, what about the show.

JASON

Don't worry about the show. We'll pull it out.

A tow truck pulls up behind REESE and the few guys with him.

REESE

Tow's here. I'll keep you updated. Break a leg.

JASON

Thanks.

(To the group)

Okay, nobody panic. Reese's car broke down. They're not going to make it. We can go on without them.

CHET

Whoa. They okay?

JASON

Yeah they're fine. Let's go in.

INT. BROCKPORT STUDENT CENTER - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The remaining CLEFS walk into the student center. CHERYL BENSINGER, a short redhead, with a lot of freckles, in all black with a red scarf, approaches the distraught men. She is way too excited, and remains so for the entire evening.

CHERYL

You guys must be the Cleftomaniacs.

JON

Nice to meet you...

CHERYL

Cheryl. I'm your host. We're going through sound checks now. Your dressing room is that way. Pizza is waiting for you.

RON

I freaking love pizza.

The men walk down the hallway and find a room adorned with a sign that reads "Stratford University Cleftomaniacs."

INT. BROCKPORT DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The guys put their bags down. Grab some pizza and start assembling their uniforms. JON pulls JASON aside.

JON

Its gonna be rough man.

JASON

Whatever, lets just do it. Party and peace out.

JON

What ever you say.

CHERYL enters the room. MATT, who didn't have a shirt on, quickly covers himself up. CHERYL smiles.

CHERYL

We're ready for you in there.

JASON

Thanks.

CHERYL leaves the room.

JON

Circle up.

The group circles up.

JON (CONT.)

Lets try "Such Great Heights."

He blows a pitch and counts them in. The group sounds awful, it is clear several members are missing and the sound is suffering. JON does not look happy and shoots a disapproving look to JASON. JASON shrugs. JON cuts off the group.

JON

(Exhaling loudly)

Let's go.

They leave the room.

INT. BROCKPORT AUDITORIUM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The men enter the auditorium. It is merely an all purpose room converted into a performance space. Fold up chairs make up the audience and a small sliver of a stage is where the groups will perform.

The Clefs climb on stage and assemble themselves to sing. JON rearranges some of the microphones. He then blows a pitch and counts the group in. The same song, sounding awful yet again. He cuts them off and moves to a different song with similar results. The SOUND GUY at the back of the room gives a puzzled look. CHERYL who stands near him, bops along to the song.

JON cuts off the group.

JON

(To the group)

Listen, the tenors are going to have to compensate a little. Just sing what you know. We've got this guys.

(To the back of the room)

We're good!

They climb off the stage and take their seats in the back of the auditorium.

Through a fade, the audience fills up with people. CHERYL takes the stage, the crowd cheers for her.

CHERYL

Hey everybody! Thanks for coming, we've got a solid night of a cappella ahead of us. First up,

Brockport's own all male group, The  
B-Men!

The crowd cheers wildly. As she walks off the stage, a huge group of Khaki and blue shirted men walk on. Barely fitting on the stage, they get into formation and sing a collection of mid tempo, emotional songs. Their sound is tight and rounded. JON shoots a skeptical look at JASON. JASON shrugs. When they finish, CHERYL gets back on stage.

CHERYL  
Awesome job guys. Next up is The  
Acchordians.

A mixed group of males and females in polos walk on the stage. Their sound is better than the last. JON is panicking. Group after group takes the stage, each one very well rehearsed. MATT leans over to CHET.

MATT  
How many groups are there?

CHERYL takes the stage to introduce the Clefs.

CHERYL  
Now, all the way from Stratford  
University, The Cleftomaniacs.

The Clefs get up and take the stage. Their low numbers are shockingly visible on stage. The crowd whispers to each other.

JASON  
Hi. We're the Clefs from  
Stratford.Â And we would have had  
more people, but The B-Men stole  
them from us.

The crowd laughs uneasily.

JASON (CONT.)  
Here we go.

JON gives the pitch and counts the group in. They sound hollow and empty. The awkwardness of the performance reads on the faces of the group as well as the crowd. Time passes slowly through three songs "Such Great Heights" "Lonesome Road" and "Welcome to the Jungle", until it is finally time for them to get off the stage.

CHERYL comes back on.

CHERYL  
Well. That was good. Last up, my  
personal favorite group and certainly  
the most attractive, The Beautiful  
Pitches!

CHERYL is joined on stage by her all female group. Each one of them in all black with some kind of red flare. They line up and sing a five song set of "girl power" hits ranging from



Madonna to the Spice Girls. The Clefs are no longer in their seats.

INT. BROCKPORT DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The members of the Clefs sit in almost silence in the dressing room. Clearly depressed from their horrid performance, they quietly get undressed and back into their street clothes.

JON

(Angry)

Is my car almost ready to go?

A few of the guys holler back at him.

JASON

What? You're leaving?

JON

Yeah, that was the understanding.  
Besides I don't want to hang around  
this child's-excuse-for-a-campus  
anyway.

JASON

Suit yourself. For the remainder of  
you, we're staying at Cheryl's  
house. There is going to be a  
party. We are getting very drunk.

A few of the guys laugh. JON and his car share some goodbye hugs and hand shakes with the guys that are staying. With their backpacks in hand they leave the room. JASON, MATT, CHET, FRANKIE, and RON remain.

RON

(With pizza in his mouth)

Suckers.

EXT. CHERYL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The five remaining Clefs stand outside of a dark house on the streets outside of the SUNY Brockport campus.

CHET

This can't be right.

JASON

This is the address she gave me.  
Now remember, we're representatives  
of Stratford University and the  
Clefs, so let's try and

The group walks up to the front door and knocks. CHERYL opens the door.

CHERYL

Hello boys. Please come in, you can  
put your bags down here.

INT. CHERYL'S HOUSE - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

They walk into the house. It's a quaint place, very organized, clearly inhabited by women. A handful of girls from the Pitches and few of the B-Men stand around awkwardly in the main room of the house. Quiet 90s rock plays from the stereo. RON and FRANKIE share a disappointed look. The scene resembles a gender segregated middle school dance.

CHERYL

You guys will be sleeping in this room. The couch pulls out.

JASON

Thanks.

CHERYL

Drinks are in the kitchen.

The boys walk through and get some beers, then come back out to the main party room. A few people are talking, but mostly everyone is just looking at each other and sipping their drinks.

MATT

This is awkward.

CHET

Seriously.

RON

What say we do this up Stratford style?

FRANKIE

Ron, don't.

But its too late, RON pulls his IPOD out his pocket and moves quickly over to the stereo. He reaches behind to plug it in. Suddenly the quiet 90s rock cuts out and is replaced by thumping hip hop. A few of the girls shoot RON a dirty look. JASON enters the room and approaches the rest of the Clefs.

JASON

Ron?

FRANKIE

Yep.

FRANKIE points to RON who is dancing by himself in the middle of the room.

MATT

I think he's got the right idea.

CHET

Agreed.

MATT and CHET glance at each other, nod and both simultaneously,

without warning chug their beers. FRANKIE and JASON picking up on this, follow suit. Each guy then grabs one of the Pitches and brings her out onto the dance floor.

RON

There we go. There we go.

MATT (V.O.)

The rest of the night is a bit hazy.

INT. CHERYL'S HOUSE - SEQUENCE: BROCKPORT DEBAUCHERY

A. The guys try to dance with girls, the girls roll their eyes and leave.

B. RON dances with a cute looking boy.

C. Everyone sits around a table playing a drinking game with playing cards. RON is seen talking to the boy in the background.

D. MATT chats with CHERYL. His posture is awkward. She does most of the talking, he stands there and nods.

E. Everyone singing the song on the stereo at the top of their lungs. In perfect harmony.

F. CHERYL talks to a GIRL FRIEND. They look at MATT

CHERYL

Don't you just love the awkward boy?

GIRL FRIEND

Who? Him?

CHERYL

Yeah, isn't he cute. I'm gonna make out with him.

GIRL FRIEND

But he's so boring.

F. MATT makes out with CHERYL on the couch, CHET makes out with another girl on the other side of the couch, FRANKIE sits between the couples, snapping away pictures on his camera phone.

G. JASON attempts to break dance, everyone looks at

H. RON makes out with the boy from before.

INT. CHERYL'S HOUSE - DAWN

The guys are passed out in the main room. They never pulled out the couch. CHET sleeps on the couch, RON on a love seat, JASON is lying on the floor and FRANKIE is balled up on the coffee table.

The room is trashed. There are large stains on the walls. Cups and cans lie everywhere. The Clefs have single handedly destroyed the place.

INT. CHERYL'S ROOM - DAWN

MATT lies in bed with a passed out CHERYL.

MATT (V.O.)  
How did this happen?

Easy, not to wake her, he creeps out of the bed, and puts on his clothes. He knocks something over, it makes a loud noise. She turns but doesn't wake.

INT. CHERYL'S HOUSE - DAWN - CONTINUOUS

MATT looking appropriately disheveled walks down the stairs. He starts to put his shoes on and zip up his bag. CHET stirs and wakes up to greet him.

CHET  
(Whispering)  
Morning sunshine. It's about time.  
Have fun with Ms. Bensinger?

MATT  
Who?

CHET  
Cheryl. Cheryl Bensinger.

MATT  
Oh, that's her last name?

The others guys hearing them begin to wake up. FRANKIE turns over. Suddenly, with a loud cracking and crashing noise, the coffee table collapses underneath his weight.

JASON  
Oh shit.

CHERYL (O.C.)  
Matt!?

MATT  
Fuck. Go! go! go!.

The five guys jump out of "bed" grab their belongings and run out of the house as fast as they can. CHERYL, half awake, walks downstairs. The guys are gone.

CHERYL  
Oh, what the fuck?!

EXT. CHERYL'S HOUSE - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

The guys run into CHET's car and peel off. Laughing and cursing all the way. They turn off of CHERYL's street.

FADE OUT.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

The Clefs are in their final meeting of the year. They sit around in warm weather clothes. No sheet music is out. The atmosphere is relaxed.

MATT (V.O.)

Half way done with college.  
Sophomore year was coming to a close. I thought I had figured out who I was and what I wanted to do, but really I defined myself by the people I was with. Above anything else, I was a Clef.

JASON addresses the group.

JASON

Couple of house keeping things to get to. First off, great job everyone at the year end concert. Big turn out, solid sound. I think all the seniors would agree that we couldn't have asked for a better last show.

The group applauds loudly.

JASON (CONT.)

Second, there's the matter of elections for officer positions for next year. Music director and President. Raise your hand if you want to be music director.

CHET is the only one to raise his hand.

JASON (CONT.)

All in favor of Chet.

Everyone raises their hand.

JASON (CONT.)

Congratulations Mr. Mackenzie you are the new music director.

CHET

Thanks guys, I won't let you down.

The guys "golf clap" for CHET.

JASON (CONT.)

Who would like to run for President?

REESE and MATT raise their hands.

JASON (CONT.)

Ok Turner and Reese, come on up.  
Each one of you gets a minute to  
state your platform and then you'll  
go out of the room and we'll vote.  
Reese.

REESE

I've been in the Clefs since  
freshmen year. Next year I'll be a  
senior and I know that we can take  
this group to the next level. I've  
seen what works and what doesn't. A  
cappella is about having fun, and  
with me you'll have so much fun you  
won't even know how much fun you're  
having. So remember, a vote for me  
is a vote for America.

The guys cheer, a few chant "U.S.A."

MATT

While I haven't been in it as long,  
I love a cappella and have learned  
a lot from our graduating seniors.  
I've got some great ideas for us  
and think we can really make a name  
for ourselves in the a cappella  
scene across the country.

The guys clap respectively.

JASON

Thank you.

MATT and REESE head out into the hallway. They sit there for a  
minute in silence. JASON sticks his head out of the door.

JASON (CONT.)

Ok, come on back.

REESE

(To MATT)

Hey, whatever happens in there...

They shake hands and enter the room.

JASON

Congratulations Reese, you are the  
new Clefs president.

The guys cheer and chant "U.S.A." REESE shakes a few hands. CHET  
pats MATT on the back.

JASON

On to the big announcement. Next  
year the Clefs will be going to the  
NCCA's!

The guys cheer and slap hands. Everyone is over joyed. MATT leans

over to CHET.

MATT

The what's?

MATT (V.O.)

The NCCA's or National Championship of College A cappella, is the March Madness of a cappella. All the best groups across the country compete in a tournament like system to see who is the best group. It's incredibly competitive but also tons of fun.

JASON

We put in the app a couple of weeks ago, but us seniors aren't going to be here. So we're leaving it up to you guys to carry on the legacy. We know you can bring home the title.

JON clears his throat and signals to JASON.

JASON (CONT.)

Oh right. One more thing. Jon the envelope please.

JON hands JASON a piece of paper.

JASON (CONT.)

I hold in my hand an E-mail from Cheryl Bensinger, president of the Brockport Beautiful Pitches.

A few of the guys cat call and utter expletives. They tussle MATT's hair and elbow him.

JASON (CONT.)

(Reading, dripping with sarcasm)

Dear Stratford Cleftomaniacs. Thank you so much for visiting our lovely school. For showing up on time, with all of your members and performing well. Also, thank you so much for keeping my house clean and treating it like you would your own. We really appreciate all of the work you put in to help clean up and keep things in order. Any time, honestly, any time, you'd like to come back and use our facilities and homes as your personal shit holes please do. Sincerely yours, Cheryl Mackenzie, Pitches President. PS, Who's paying for the coffee table?

A couple of the guys shout at FRANKIE and slap him on the back. He shrugs and sticks his arms up, looking innocent.

EXT. REDINGTON HOUSE - DAY

Early fall, Junior year. CHET and MATT are moving boxes and furniture into the Redington House.

MATT (V.O.)

The greatest gift I ever recieved in college, was the willing down of the Redington House. Not that this place was a palace.

CUT TO: INTERIORS OF THE HOUSE

INT. REDINGTON HOUSE - DAY

The house is disgusting. It's dirty and dingy. The walls are cracked, the floors are scratched and the carpet is pulled up.

MATT (V.O.) (CONT)

Over the years, Redington had become known as the unofficial home of the Clefs. Living there was like a changing of the guard. We were it, we were the Clefs.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

CHET stands behind the piano. The Clefs have changed once again. JASON, JON, TJ, and GEOFF are gone, replaced by new freshmen, BLAKE, DEAN, CHRIS, and SEAN. They stand around in small groups going over different parts of their music. The air is tense, everyone is trying hard to learn the music, but stress levels are high. STUART STEVENS is missing.

MATT (V.O.)

Our qualifier wasn't for another few months, but already we were stepping it up. We added a third night of rehearsals, and extended them by an hour each. Live, breathe, die a cappella.

CHET

Alright! Can I get everyone to come around the piano. Let's turn this way please.

Everyone but KIRK and RON turn around and come towards

KIRK

Is it like "ba-da-dwee-da?" or "da-ba-dwee-da?"

RON

I think its "ba-be-dwee-da."

CHET



(Cutting them off)  
Guys! Piano. Now.

RON  
Shit. Jeez. Sorry.

CHET  
Please watch the tempo, don't  
forget the crescendo at 52. Let's  
take it from the pick up to  
measure 21. Five, six, seven,  
eight.

The group sings several bars of Justin Timberlake's "What Goes Around Comes Around". It sounds alright, to the average listener it would even be considered a good performance.

CHET  
(Sighing)  
Again. Guys, watch the intonation.  
This is not NCCA caliber. We're  
going to have a lot of work to do,  
if we even think we're going to  
make it to the semi's. Let's do it  
again, this time watch out for the  
fifth measure after--

STUART storms in the room. It appears that he has just ran here from where ever he was. He is out of breath, he throws down his things. Sits down in a huff and fumes.

STUART  
Sorry. I was fighting with Amy.  
What a bitch.

CHET  
Don't let it happen again.

STUART  
She just thinks she's such hot  
shit.

CHET  
Save it for the break.

STUART  
She's cheating on me I know she is.

CHET gives up. The group relaxes.

ADAM  
What happened Stu?

STUART  
It's nothing. She just won't tell  
me where she was last night. She's  
covering something.

KIRK  
I don't know. She wouldn't do

something like that to you.

STUART  
Yeah she would. She's too hot  
that's the problem.

RON  
How is that a problem?

STUART  
Whatever it just is.

The guys don't know what to do next. STUART still fumes in his chair. An idea comes over MATT, he goes over to CHET at the piano and whispers something to him.

CHET  
(to MATT)  
We have other stuff to do.

MATT  
Just do it.

CHET gives in again and plays pitches on the piano. The guys immediately know what he's up to. CHET counts them in. They sing the intro to "We Are The Champions" directly to Stuart.

STUART  
Stop it. This isn't working

The guys insist. Starting directly at STUART trying to cheer him up. He begins to smile. Then laugh. He stands, facing them. He sings the solo. It is a silly, overly done riff laden version but everyone of them lives it up. They are thoroughly enjoying the moment. The song finishes and the guys cheer.

CHET  
Ok, now back to the real work  
please?

INT. DANCE STUDIO - DAY

The Clefs, in sweats, stand in formation in front of a wall of mirrors. RON, taking the role of choreographer, stands in front facing the mirrors.

MATT (V.O.) (CONT)  
Each beat of each song was to be  
accompanied by a well planned out,  
subtle but noticeable dance move.

RON walks the boys through the choreography. Some are picking it up while others seem lost. FRANKIE concentrates hard on his movement.

RON  
Lean, two three four. And pop! two  
three four. Walk, walk, walk. Dip.

RON turns around.

RON (CONT.)  
Any questions?

STUART raises his hand.

STUART  
Does the pop come before or after  
the "bun-nuh-nuh-nah"s?

RON  
After. Lets see it.

RON turns around to watch. CHET blows the pitch pipe and counts them in. Queen "We Are The Champions." They sing and dance, neither is 100%.

RON (CONT.)  
Better. Don't forget to dip.

He demonstrates.

RON (CONT.)  
Again.

MATT (V.O.)  
The preparation didn't stop there.  
Many late nights were spent with  
countless dress rehearsals. That  
three song set was ingrained so deeply  
in our memory that to this day I  
could sing through it with my eyes closed  
and one vocal chord tied behind my  
back.

INT. AVERY HALL - NIGHT

The Clefs, are in street clothes. They sing for an empty auditorium. They finish up the song that was started in the previous scene. The choreography is fluid and unified, the sound is rich.

CHET  
Not bad. Basses don't scoop the  
entrances and watch your blend. You  
need to hold down the sound for the  
entire group.

CHET looks to REESE.

REESE  
Great dress everybody. Friday 2 pm,  
behind the Library. It's a 3 hour  
drive to Rutgers. Don't be late.

EXT. RUTGERS STUDENT CENTER PARKING LOT - DAY

The Clefs pull up to the student center at Rutgers. They get out of the cars and walk into the building.

INT. RUTGERS AUDITORIUM - DAY

Several a cappella groups in various dress sit in the auditorium. The NCCA JUDGE, an official looking man in khakis, a tie, sporting an official looking name tag, addresses the groups from the stage.

NCCA JUDGE

The order will be as follows.  
First, Crafted Sound, then Choral  
Pleasure, The Dead Ringers, The  
Cleftomaniacs, and finally rounding  
our the show, The Blue Notes. Each  
group has twelve minutes to  
perform. A time keeper in the front  
row will hold up warnings when you  
have three minutes, and one minute  
left. Time starts when the first  
pitch or movement is initiated. Going  
over will result in a DQ. You can  
wait off stage for your group to be  
called. At the end everyone will  
come out for the awards  
presentation. The top group will  
advance to the Semifinal round, to  
be held here at Rutgers in a month.  
The winner will perform an encore  
victory song at the end.

INT. RUTGERS DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

The Clefs stand in a circle in a classroom turned dressing room. They are stretching and humming warm ups to themselves.

REESE

Lets take a couple minutes of  
silence. Think to yourself what you  
need to work on.

MATT turns off the lights. The group spreads out across the room, each one finding a private spot to think and meditate. After several moments of silence the lights flick back on.

CHET

Circle up.

The group gets in a circle. In a familiar ritual they begin massaging each other.

CHET (CONT.)

I'll start. Remember to blend.

REESE

Don't speed up.

RON

Concentrate on choreography.

MATT

Smile.

CHET

Switch.

They turn around to massage the other guy.

FRANKIE

Don't faint.

STUART

Have fun. Don't fuck up.

DEAN

It's not a competition, just  
another show.

They finish up massaging.

REESE

Couldn't have said it better  
myself. Don't worry about winning,  
just set out to entertain. Let's  
perform at our personal best. The rest will  
come. Bring it in.

The guys put their hands in.

REESE (CONT.)

On three. One. two. three.

ALL

Let's steal some hearts.

INT. RUTGERS AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The house is full. Group after group perform. In rapid succession,  
clips from each of their sets play out. The Clefs are  
clearly the most well put together. They blow the  
competition out of the water. The crowd cheers wildly for  
them.

The NCCA JUDGE takes the stage with certificates in his  
hand.

NCCA JUDGE

One more time for all the groups.

The crowd cheers.

NCCA JUDGE (CONT.)

The winner of tonight's  
quarterfinals round will go on to compete  
in the semis. Tonight the judges  
present, in second place,

A mixed group in blue and black cheer wildly and jump up and down.  
Two girls walk out to accept their award.

NCCA JUDGE (CONT.)

Congratulations. And in first  
place, with an outstanding score,  
Stratford University Cleftomaniacs.

The Clefs go nuts. REESE steps out of the group to accept their award.  
The audience cheers in support of the decision. All the  
other groups leave the stage. The Clefs perform "Welcome to  
the Jungle." Smiles on their faces detract from the sound,  
but it doesn't matter.

INT. RUTGERS DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT

The guys rush back into the dressing room. They're ecstatic, talking,  
sharing high fives and laughing. REESE and CHET enter the  
room. CHET holds their score sheet in his hand.

REESE  
Alright, alright! Chill out  
everyone.

The group stops and turns to its leaders.

REESE (CONT.)  
Clap it up! Good job!

The group cheers.

CHET  
Okay, okay. It's not all roses on  
this end.  
(Rifling through the score  
sheet)  
We barely won. We only out placed  
Crafted Sound by three points. This  
is not going to fly at semis.

The mood turns cold.

CHET (CONT.)  
One judge says, the tempo gets away  
from us in every song. Another said  
the soloists were consistently  
under pitch. And someone had his hands  
in his pockets. We may have won  
tonight, but it's not going to be  
enough at the semifinals. So live  
it up, but once we get back to SU,  
the rehearsals are going to be just  
as intense. If not more.

MATT's face looks worried.

MATT (V.O.)  
And they were.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

The group stands in formation. Something is just not clicking.  
The rehearsal has been going on for hours and its starting  
to show on the members.

CHET  
Let's do it again.

MATT  
Again? Chet, come on its 12:15.  
Some of us have eight AMs.

STUART  
Yeah and some of us have drinking  
to get to.

CHET  
Let's do it again.

CHET walks over to the piano and plucks out the notes.

CHET (CONT.)  
We'll do it until its right. Clean  
it up. Now, three, four.

They sing, but the exhaustion is heard in their voices. The vocal percussion is waning, he even drops out at certain points to catch his breath. Their movement is half-assed at best. CHET cuts them off.

CHET  
Stop stop stop. This is worthless.  
Everyone go home, look it over.  
We'll work on it again Thursday.

Angry, the guys break formation, put on their coats and leave.  
CHET, MATT and REESE hang back.

REESE  
Come on CHET, don't you think it's  
good enough? We've been working on  
the same three songs for months.  
How much better can they get?

CHET  
Better. They can get better. If we  
have any chance of winning, they  
need to get better.

REESE  
Winning isn't the only thing that  
matters. This is supposed to be  
fun.

CHET  
I'm having fun.

REESE  
No you're not, you're drilling  
everybody into the ground, and driving  
yourself crazy at that. You need to  
chill out and remember that this is  
about entertaining and having a  
good time. Not overworking for some

bull shit competition.

MATT

Reese.

CHET

Stay out of this Matt.

REESE

We can't keep having rehearsals like this. It's driving everyone crazy.

CHET

Am I the only one here that wants to do well? What ever happened to taking it to the next level?

REESE

All within reason. Don't force this group into something its not. Keep it up and you'll have a mutiny on your hands.

REESE storms out of the room.

INT. LECTURE HALL - MORNING

MATT walks into the academic building through two large double doors. He picks up "The Stratford Crier" SU's school newspaper before entering the lecture hall. The class has already begun.

MATT sits down in the giant lecture and pulls out the newspaper. He scans the front page. The headline of a small side article reads "Student Attacks Girlfriend With Kitchen Knife."

MATT gets a closer look.

CUT TO: STUART'S ROOM

INT. STUART'S ROOM - MORNING

STUART is packing up his things. He violently throws books and clothes into boxes. All we hear is MATT reading the article. Eventually STUART sits down on his naked bed looks around at his empty room and drops his head down in shame.

MATT (V.O.)

A Stratford University student was attacked and threatened with a kitchen knife at her apartment on Sunday night. The female student was driven back to her apartment by a friend and fellow SU student. They saw the female student's ex-boyfriend, Stuart Stevens, waiting outside her



apartment, the female student and friend decided to drive away and return when Stevens was gone, according to the Police report. The female was dropped off at her apartment at 6 p.m. and saw no sign of Stevens. She entered her apartment and went upstairs to her bedroom. Stevens came out from behind a bedroom door and attacked her, officials said.

Stevens allegedly hit her repeatedly and threw her into a television set. The victim tried to push him away, but she could not. When the victim asked the attacker to leave, he pulled out a kitchen knife and threatened to kill her with them, police said.

CUT TO BACK TO MATT.

INT. LECTURE HALL - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

MATT is in utter disbelief. He wipes his hand across his face, his jaw has hit the floor. He double checks his facts, getting a closer look at STUART's name. Shocked by the news, he gets out his cell phone and immediately texts all the members of The Clefs, excluding STUART STEVENS of course.

MATT (V.O.)

The Crier. Front page. Bottom right.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

The Clefs sit at the desks in the rehearsal room. CHET and REESE stand at the front of the room. STUART STEVENS is noticeably absent. The tension and devastation in the room is palpable.

RON

So is he gone?

ADAM

Yeah! What's going on? Did they kick him out of school?

RON

Yeah, they cut him out of school.

RON looks around for a laugh. All of the guys stare at him in disbelief.

FRANKIE

Not funny Ron.

REESE

He's gone. He sent me an E-mail

saying he was going to be taking some time off, and thanking us for all of the opportunities we've given him over the years.

CHET

Look, rumors can fly. We don't even know what really happened. The Crier isn't the best source for honest news.

FRANKIE

Is he going to graduate?

REESE

I don't know. For now all we can do is show him our support. I think it'd be a nice thing for a few of us to shoot him a message. Let him know we're here for him.

KIRK

Why?

REESE

Because its the right thing to do.

KIRK

The kid attacked someone with a knife! I'm sorry but he doesn't deserve our sympathy

REESE

He was still a member of this group.

BRIAN

What about his solo?

CHET

(Annoyed)

That should really by the last thing on your mind. But. That's why we have back ups. Matt gets it.

JAKE

I'm sure it's all a big misunderstanding. He'll be back soon right? And then couldn't he just come with us to the semi's?

REESE

It's not that simple, there are all kinds of rules and regulations. If he's not a full time student...

JAKE

Great.

MATT

Hold on a second, are we really talking about the competition right now? What about her?

CHET

Is there an issue?

MATT

We can't just ignore this and move on. He could be going to jail and who knows how traumatized she is.

Everyone begins to open their mouths and speak at one.

ALL

Yeah! What about him? He's an ass. He deserves to go to jail. Etc.

REESE

ALRIGHT, EVERYBODY SHUT UP! Let's sing.

The Clefs stand begrudgingly. Ironically they have to sing "We Are The Champions." Everyone is anxious, and beaten down by their discussion. CHET plays the starting pitches. MATT belts out the solo, he sounds good but isn't as clean as STUART once was. The audio of them singing continues.

CUT TO: HIGHWAY

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

The CLEFS' cars drive down the road.

INT. RUTGERS AUDITORIUM - DAY

The CLEFS, not in uniform, finish the song in their sound check. CHET is visibly stressed.

CHET

Don't speed up the bridge. Shit.

REESE

They're asking us to wrap it up. Let's go.

INT. RUTGERS DRESSING ROOM - DUSK

The CLEFS file back into the dressing room. They start to put together their uniforms and do their warm up rituals.

MATT (V.O.)

It would have been nice to get my first solo under different means, but I was happy just to do it. As for the rest of the group, their concentration was elsewhere. Still torn apart by

the news.

INT. RUTGERS AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The audience is full, dark and silent. The CLEFS are on stage. The sound of their voices is muffled. They seem to be just going through the motions, none of them put forth the effort they showed previously. Their set comes to a close and despite a mediocre performance the crowd cheers vigorously. Smiles try to crack through the guys' expressionless faces. Instead all that reads is exhaustion.

MATT (V.O.)

Like that we were done. No matter what the issue was, something about the crowd's reaction always reminded us what we were doing there.

INT. RUTGERS AUDITORIUM - LATER THAT NIGHT

All of the groups stand on stage. The CLEFS barely fit on with everyone else.

NCCA JUDGE

Tonight's winners, ladies and gentlemen. In third place, Out of Treble!

A small girl leaves her teal dressed group to claim

NCCA JUDGE

Second, UB Men's Octet.

Two guys in blue blazers and khakis grab their award.

NCCA JUDGE

And finally, in first place, earning a spot at the finals at Lincoln Center...Sonic Blend.

The sole mixed group wearing black and white goes crazy. Their entire group takes center stage, as the remaining groups file out. The CLEFS dejected pat each other on the back and congratulate their competitors. REESE shoots CHET a look that can only mean, "I told you so."

MATT (V.O.)

Stuart's meltdown became synonymous with this show. Months later, we learned he had been suspended indefinitely and was seeking psychological help.

CUT TO: AMY'S ROOM

INT. AMY'S ROOM - DAY

AMY sorts through some mail. She says a letter from STUART and

throws it away.

MATT (V.O.) (CONT)  
His girlfriend never pressed  
charges, he tried to apologize countless  
times but she wouldn't have it.

CUT TO: AVERY HALL AUDITORIUM

INT. AVERY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The Clefs can be heard singing on stage. A reformed, cleaner looking  
STUART sits in the front row, bopping his head along to the  
music.

MATT (V.O.) (CONT)  
Two years later Stuart came back to  
Stratford. And though he chose not  
to rejoin the Clefs, he came to  
every concert.

INT. CAREER COUNSELING OFFICE - DAY

MATT, now in his senior year, sits in CHARLIE VICTORY'S office.  
MATT holds a thick stack of papers in his hand. CHARLIE  
enters the room.

CHARLIE VICTORY  
Matt! So good to see you.

MATT  
You too Charlie.

CHARLIE VICTORY  
Been working on the job hunt?

MATT  
Well yes, and no.

CHARLIE VICTORY  
Yes and no.

MATT  
I've got my resume and cover  
letters done.

CHARLIE VICTORY  
Fantastic! Let me see.

MATT hands over a few papers. CHARLIE snatches them out of his  
hand, gets out a red pen and starts marking things up.

CHARLIE VICTORY (CONT.)  
Good, good. This is good.

MATT  
Thanks.

CHARLIE VICTORY

A couple of formatting and grammatical things, but all in all not bad. Oh! Don't forget to arrange it by importance.

MATT

Right.

CHARLIE VICTORY

With that out of the way, you should be applying to some places.

MATT

Well I've been talking to some people at Lincoln Center. There's an entry level position in their programming unit.

CHARLIE VICTORY

Interesting, go on.

MATT

It would be booking acts, maintaining relationships

CHARLIE VICTORY

Great! Perfect for your background. Aim high, I always say.

MATT

I've never heard you say that.

CHARLIE VICTORY

I just started saying it.

MATT

The job is perfect for me, it's exactly what I want to be doing.

CHARLIE VICTORY

Go for it Matty! But don't forget your back ups. You have back ups? You need a plan B, and even a plan C, plan D wouldn't hurt either.

MATT

I guess there are some museums at home I could apply to.

CHARLIE VICTORY

Ah! Matt. So well prepared. If every student was like you, what would I do.

MATT

Be out of a job?

CHARLIE VICTORY

You're right! Then I'd need a  
career counselor.

CHARLIE VICTORY laughs hard at his own joke. MATT starts to laugh  
uneasily.

CHARLIE VICTORY (CONT.)  
Well this has been fun. Keep  
talking to people, networking

MATT  
Will do.

MATT starts to put together his belongings, get up and  
leave.

CHARLIE VICTORY  
Oh and Matt? Good luck at the next  
concert, can't wait to hear you  
guys.

MATT  
Thanks.

MATT (V.O.)  
Everyone's a fan.

INT. REDINGTON HOUSE KITCHEN - NIGHT

MATT, RON, CHET and a few other Clefs sit at the kitchen table.  
They are drinking beers and playing a card game.

CHET  
(To RON)  
Your turn.

RON  
Thanks.

MATT (V.O.)  
We had reached senior year.  
Officially in charge. We had taken  
on a few new members, I replaced  
Reese as president of the group.  
Chet used to say something about  
senior year. I think he stole it  
from a John Hughes movie.

CHET  
Life moves quickly, if you don't  
stop to look around you'll miss it.

MATT (V.O.)  
Or something like that. I can't  
speak for the rest of them, but up  
until senior year I was just going through  
the motions. We all took a  
conscious step to soak it in.  
Starting with more, uh, relaxation.

CHET  
Sevens. Everybody drink.

They all take swigs of their drinks.

MATT (V.O.)  
There was singing though too.

CUT TO: LATER

INT. REDINGTON HOUSE KITCHEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

Everyone is noticeably drunker. They sing sloppily in

MATT (V.O.)  
Good singing.

CUT TO: REHEARSAL

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT

The group sings Eve 6 "Here's to The Night" MATT's new solo song. He sounds seasoned and professional. He rips into the high notes with effortless expertise. They finish singing, he cuts off his ringing last note.

KIRK  
You make that sound easy.

MATT  
Thanks.

CHET  
Its good guys.

MATT  
But...

CHET  
It could be better.

MATT (V.O.)  
Some things never change.

CHET  
Watch the tempo and Matt don't get away from the group. Everyone needs to keep listening.

CHET checks the time on his phone.

CHET (CONT.)  
Alright, I think we're good for tonight. Go home, look over your music. Call is at 6.

CUT BACK TO: REDINGTON KITCHEN



INT. REDINGTON HOUSE KITCHEN - THAT SAME NIGHT

The kitchen is trashed with cans. MATT and CHET sit at the table.

CHET  
You nervous?

MATT  
For the big show tomorrow? Not really, I mean its going to be emotional but--

CHET  
I meant Lincoln Center.

MATT  
I know what you meant. I guess.

CHET  
It's a big deal.

MATT  
It is.

CHET  
How competitive is it?

MATT  
Hundreds of applicants. Two spots

CHET  
Shit. You'll get it.

CHET stands and begins to clean.

MATT  
Hopefully.

CHET  
When do you find out?

MATT  
I was supposed to this week. What about that teaching job?

He finishes cleaning.

CHET  
It fell through. I'm thinking about grad school.

MATT  
Oh, sounds good.

CHET  
Yeah. Ok, I'm going to bed.

MATT

Night.

CHET heads upstairs. MATT sits at the table.

INT. MATT'S BEDROOM - MORNING

MATT is sleeping in bed. His phone on the night stand begins to vibrate. He stirs and picks it up.

MATT

Hello? Yes, this is him. Uh huh.  
Ok. Yes. Well, thanks for the  
opportunity.

He hangs up and puts the phone down. MATT is in the shower. He puts on his Clefs uniform.

INT. REDINGTON HOUSE KITCHEN - MORNING - CONTINUOUS

CHET sits at the table eating breakfast. MATT comes down in full uniform.

CHET

Where you going? The concert isn't  
for a few hours.

MATT

Out.

MATT walks out of the house.

EXT. CAMPUS - DAY

MATT walks across campus. The spring weather is apparent, co-eds sit in bikinis and tank tops on the quad. MATT looks around taking in his surroundings. A group of girls start to point and giggle at MATT's presence. They maliciously call him out

GIGGLING GIRL 1

Hey Clef! Sing something for us.

GIGGLING GIRL 2

Yeah! Lets hear it. Serenade me!

MATT

Fuck off.

GIGGLING GIRL 1

Aww he's sad. Don't be sad Clef.

The girls giggle more. MATT picks up his pace, trying to ignore them.

INT. CAREER COUNSELING OFFICE - DAY

MATT walks up to CHARLIE VICTORY'S office, the door is locked and the lights are off. MATT digs through his bag and finds post-its. He writes.

"Charlie, Didn't get the job, see you at the show. -Matt"

He sticks the post-it on the door.

INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - EVENING

The Clefs are performing their usual pre-show ritual. The lights are off, they sit in silence. The lights come on, they circle up and begin massages. The usual "Have fun" "Don't rush" and "listen" comments are said.

MATT  
(Still in a bad mood)  
Pass.

MATT (V.O.)  
I regret that decision to this day.

The guys give him a puzzled look.

CHET  
Never forget. Bring it in.

ALL  
Let's steal some hearts.

INT. AVERY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The max capacity crowd is buzzing.

MATT (V.O.)  
How it all fell on one day I'll never know. Just the way of the universe, I guess. In retrospect there are so many things I should have said to the guys, "Cherish every moment" "Breathe" "Take it in" but in my selfish anger all I could say was "Pass." I didn't deserve this crowd.

The lights go out. The crowd cheers. The Clefs jog on stage. They sing a few songs, the crowd enjoys it. Smiles stretch across everyone's faces. MATT walks to the microphone.

MATT  
This is going to be our last song.  
Thanks for coming. We're the  
Cleftomaniacs.

Their last song is MATT's solo "Here's to the Night." He sings it better than ever before, all his anger and bitterness translates into a rock star performance. They finish up and the crowd goes crazy. The group bows and walks off stage. MATT is the last one to leave the stage.

INT. AVERY HALL LOBBY - NIGHT

A bunch of fans hang around in the lobby of the auditorium. The Clefs emerge to cheers and hugs from friends. MATT comes out alone. A few people come up to him and congratulate him. An

official looking man in a suit approaches MATT.

DON BRANDSTON  
Matt Turner?

MATT  
Uh yeah.

They shake hands.

DON BRANDSTON  
I'm Don Brandston, A&R Sony BMG.

MATT  
Oh? Good to meet you.

DON BRANDSTON  
You sounded great tonight. We've been following your group's status for a while now and think you have a wonderful voice.

MATT  
Wow. I don't know what to say.

DON BRANDSTON  
It's great Matt. A well trained, pop rock voice. Have you ever considered a job in the music industry?

MATT  
Thanks, uh, no but...

DON BRANDSTON  
Here's my card. We'd love to have you come out and demo some stuff for us. What do you say?

MATT  
Yes, of course. Thank you.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

MATT sings into a microphone. BRANDSTON and a SOUND MIXER sit in the booth, they approve of MATT's sound.

INT. BRANDSTON'S OFFICE - DAY

BRANDSTON pushes a pen and contract towards MATT. MATT signs his talent away.

INT. DIVE ROCK CLUB - NIGHT

MATT sings with a rock band on stage. There aren't many people in the crowd. He keeps singing.

INT. LARGE ROCK VENUE - NIGHT

The club turns into a much larger venue. A thousand person

crowd screams for MATT.

MATT (V.O.)

The cliché goes, "when God closes a door he opens up a window." In this case, the window happened to be slightly larger than the door and came at the exact right moment. Turns out, the spotlight didn't have to fade. I got lucky. I could let it burn.

An ironic smile crosses MATT's face. He looks into the camera.

MATT (V.O.) (CONT)

Unfortunately stuff like that only happens in the movies. If only things were that easy.

INT. AVERY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT - SAME AS BEFORE

MATT releases his smile. The rock concert has become the Clefs final show. Again, MATT steps up to the microphone.

MATT

This is going to be our last song.  
Thanks for coming. We're the  
Cleftomaniacs.

INT. AVERY HALL LOBBY - NIGHT

Again, a bunch of fans hang around in the lobby of the auditorium. The Clefs emerge to cheers and hugs from friends. MATT comes out alone. A few people come up to him and congratulate him. There is no Don Brandston. CHARLIE VICTORY approaches MATT.

CHARLIE VICTORY

Sorry to hear about Lincoln Center.

MATT

It's all good. I'll find something.  
Thanks for coming to the show.

CHARLIE VICTORY

Wouldn't have missed it. You guys  
were great.

MATT

Thanks.

CHET slams MATT on the back. MATT turns around and hugs his roommate, hard.

CHET

We did it.

MATT

We did.

CHET  
You heading back?

MATT  
Eventually.

INT. REDINGTON HOUSE - NIGHT

The Clefs and others gather in the house for one last party. Conversation, hugs and drinking are shared amongst the guests. FRANKIE, who had come back for the concert, flirts and kisses a girl on the couch. MATT stands alone, soaking it all in. A few people come up and congratulate him on his performance.

EXT. QUAD - DAY

MATT and CHET are in graduation gowns. MATT's PARENTS and CHET's FATHER take pictures of them in their gowns. They strike funny, outrageous poses.

EXT. REDINGTON HOUSE - MORNING

MATT and CHET are carrying out boxes. They finish loading the last boxes into MATT's car.

CHET  
Have a safe trip home.

MATT  
Yeah, you too.

They hug. MATT gets in his car and drives off.

INT. MATT'S CHILDHOOD HOUSE - EVENING

MATT'S mother is cooking dinner in the kitchen.

MOTHER  
Dinner's ready.

MATT enters the kitchen. He's on the phone.

MATT  
Yes, I can come in for an interview tomorrow. Thank you. Alright, see you then.

MOTHER  
How's the job hunt?

MATT  
Fine.

INT. ART MUSEUM OFFICE - DAY

MATT sits in a decorated office across from a woman who reads through his resume.

ART WOMAN  
This all looks good. When can you

start.

MATT

As soon as possible.

ART WOMAN

Wonderful. Just sign this, and  
we'll see you tomorrow.

Like Don Brandston did in his fantasy. She pushes paper and  
a pen towards him. He signs on for the job.

INT. ART MUSEUM - DAY

MATT is guiding a group of tourists through the museum. He points  
to the different paintings.

MATT

Over here is a painting by local  
artist, Mark Greenberg. It's an  
impressionistic interpretation of a  
post modern landscape. And if you  
walk this way you can head into our  
current exhibit.

MATT leads the group round the corner. A STRANGE MAN approaches  
MATT. His tour group looks on.

STRANGE MAN

Hey man! I know you.

MATT

I'm sorry?

STRANGE MAN

Yeah! Stratford University! You  
sang with the Clefs, man you were  
great.

MATT

(Reluctantly)

Yes, umm thank you. Did you have a  
question about the pieces?

STRANGE MAN

No.

MATT

Alright, well If you'll let me get  
back to my tour. Enjoy your day at  
the museum.

MATT turns back to the group. He covers up the incident with a  
smile.

MATT

That's one of our new experimental  
"living" pieces.

The group laughs.

EXT. MATT'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

The MAIL MAN is walking down the street. He carries lots of mail in his sack and in his hands. He approaches a medium size apartment building and enters.

INT. MATT'S APARTMENT - DAY

The MAIL MAN starts putting mail in the boxes. He drops a single square letter into the box marked, "M. TURNER." All the while, we hear MATT's voice.

MATT (V.O.)

Things never go as you hoped. This was the reality of the matter. I worked my ass off and became an Assistant curator. I was exactly where I was supposed to be, whether or not my college self had wanted me to be there.Â Some may say I was doomed to live out a mundane life, but to them I say, keep your fame and fortune. My brief relationship with anything more than anonymity came and went with those four years.Â AndÂ in the real world, a cappella isn't something you outright admit to being a part of.

The MAIL MAN, having finished his job exits the building. MATT, now thirty years old, gets off the elevator, his coat is on and a messenger bag is slung over his shoulder. He opens his mail box and pulls out the card. He opens the card. It reads, "You are invited to The Statford University Cleftomaniac's Twenty Year Reunion Concert. May 3rd, 2017 Avery Auditorium."

INT. AVERY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

It is the night of the Clef's Reunion Concert. The entirety of the CLEFs sing on stage. MATT and an older CHET are singing there with them.

The glowing faces of a woman DANA and her five year old daughter NOELLE are in the audience, CHET's WIFE and CHILD.

The group looks huge. Thirty men singing a cappella on stage is quite a spectacle to behold. This is their last song, it comes to an end, the group strikes their last pose, and the crowd goes wild. They rush to their feet to applaud the Clefs mega group.

DOM steps out to the microphone.

DOM

(pointing)

Our alumni ladies and gentlemen.

The crowd cheers harder. The group bows and walk off stage.



INT. REHEARSAL ROOM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The thirty CLEFS bust into the rehearsal room to gather their things. They share the usual hugs and high fives. There is laughter, applause, and singing. A couple of young CLEFS shout across the room.

YOUNG CLEF 1

Yo! Party at Redington. \$5, bring chicks.

YOUNG CLEF 2

I'm gonna get wasted.

YOUNG CLEF 1

All alumni are welcome.

MATT and CHET exchange looks that can only be read as, "can you believe these kids?" DOM enters the room.

DOM

Great job everybody! Seriously. One more time for the alumni.

The young CLEFS cheer. MATT, CHET and the other older guys wave and shake hands with some of the young guys. MATT approaches DOM.

MATT

Hey Dom, thanks for everything. It was a great show. Awesome to see you guys keeping it alive.

DOM

Of course, and thank you for coming and you know, setting up the legacy. You going to Redington?

MATT

Ha, I don't think so. But have fun.

DOM

Will do.

MATT signals to CHET. The two head to the lobby.

INT. AVERY HALL LOBBY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The crowd claps for each CLEF as they emerge. They barely cheer for MATT and CHET.

CHET

There's someone I want you to meet.

MATT and CHET walk up to his family.

CHET (CONT.)

Matt, this is my wife Dana and our daughter, Noelle. Say hi Noelle.

NOELLE

Hi.

CHET

She's a little shy.

MATT

Good to meet you Noelle, and you  
Dana.

MATT shakes DANA's hand.

DANA

Great show.

CHET

Hopefully the last. I don't think I  
can keep coming back every twenty  
years.

MATT

Nah, it was fun.

CHET

It was.

MATT

Well, I'm good to go. Coffee?

The group agrees and begins to head out of the auditorium.

CHET

Jameson? A little late night drunk  
food action?

MATT laughs.

INT. AVERY AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

The point of view abandons the group and turns around, gliding  
back into the auditorium. It is dark and empty, save for a  
sole remaining light on the stage. The light lingers for a  
moment and then with a loud shutting down noise, it goes  
out. Leaving the screen black. Roll credits.

END